

ARTICLE APPEARED  
ON PAGE **A3**NEW YORK TIMES  
2 October 1985

# U.S. Says Czech Jet Fired on Copter

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 1 — The Pentagon said today that a Czechoslovak military jet opened fire on an American Army helicopter flying a routine reconnaissance mission along West Germany's southeastern border last Saturday.

The Pentagon spokesman, Robert B. Sims, said the L-39 fighter plane fired "approximately two to four rockets" without warning. None of the rockets hit the aircraft, and the two crew members flew back to their base near Nuremberg without returning fire, he said.

"The U.S. Government has protested this irresponsible act, which endangered the lives of the U.S. crewmen," Mr. Sims said. He said that the protest was made Monday and that no response had been received so far.

The Pentagon said the incident happened on a clear afternoon and was witnessed by two separate groups of West German civilians.

## Intelligence Data Cited

One Pentagon official said the United States knew from intelligence data, apparently intercepted communications, that the Czechoslovak pilot was aware he was over West German territory when he fired and that the shooting was "deliberate."



The New York Times/Oct. 2, 1985

**The Defense Department said the incident occurred near Finsterau.**

Vaclav Zluca, press secretary for the Czechoslovak Embassy here, said he had no information from Prague on the incident.

"I can tell you that last year there was a similar case and it was proved that the helicopter was over Czechoslovak territory," Mr. Zluca said.

In April 1984 the United States said an Army helicopter from the same regiment had strayed into Czechoslovakia by accident, was fired on by two MIG fighter planes, and had retreated without suffering any damage.

Mr. Sims said that although there had been no unusual tension along the border, Warsaw Pact forays into West German airspace have been fairly common, with 17 crossings by East German or Czech pilots in the last six months.

But Pentagon officials said there had been no other shootings over West German territory in at least the past three years.

## Other Incidents Protested

Mr. Sims said the recent shooting illustrated the "more aggressive" Warsaw Pact behavior along the border with West Germany, which he said had also been evident in recent incidents between American and Soviet ground troops in East Germany.

The United States has protested a series of incidents in East Germany, including the killing last March of a United States Army major. Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger has portrayed the incidents as adding up to a pattern of deliberate confrontation.

The Pentagon said the attack on the AH-1S Cobra helicopter occurred near the village of Finsterau, about a mile inside West German territory, as it was flying a routine daily reconnaissance mission from the Second Armored Cavalry Regiment stationed at Feucht outside Nuremberg.

Mr. Sims said it was "routine border reconnaissance to see if there's a change of fortifications along the border, an increase of troop concentrations and so forth."

He said the helicopter was attacked by an L-39 fighter, a Czech-built, high-performance training plane that is also used for combat. The Army helicopter was armed with 20-millimeter guns, but did not fire back because, Mr. Sims said, "this was a mismatch at best."

Pentagon officials said they did not know how close the rockets came to the helicopter.

Mr. Sims said that the helicopter sent a radio message that it was under attack, but that there was no military alert, and no plan to change the border patrol routine.